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Political.

MR. SHEFFEY'S ADDRESS.

A few weeks since, Mr. Sheffey, a member of Congress from Virginia, wrote an address to his constituents, on the state of our public affairs—in which he took a very full and extensive view of the causes which had brought our country to its then critical and perilous situation—the government bankrupt, and on the eve of dissolution; and on which he made a statement of the various taxes and impositions which have grown out of the war, and which have been levied on the people by congress. To this address the following highly interesting postscript is appended—Let it be attentively examined by every reader. The facts and illustrations it contains will greatly assist the impartial inquirer after truth in making up a correct and unbiassed judgment on the conduct of our rulers, and enable him to decide, without farther inquiry, whether the authors and abettors of the late impolitic and ruinous war, have not for ever forfeited the confidence and support of the people.

Albany Gazette.

POSTSCRIPT.

After this letter had been committed to the press, very unexpectedly, and to the unspeakable joy of the whole nation, a British ship of war arrived at New-York on the 11th inst. with the Treaty of Peace, between the United States and Great Britain, signed by the ministers of both nations at Ghent, on the 24th December. It has since been ratified by the President and senate.

Its provisions in substance are, that there shall be a "firm and universal peace" whenever the treaty shall be ratified by both parties. That all such territory occupied by the military forces of either power at the conclusion of the treaty, as was in possession of the other at the commencement of the war, shall be immediately restored, except such of the islands in Passamaquoddy-bay as are claimed by both parties. They are to remain with the party now in possession, until the boundary shall be finally settled.

By this provision, Moose island, heretofore a part of Massachusetts, with the town of Eastport situated upon it, will remain in the possession of Great Britain, until it shall be ascertained, to which of the contending parties it belongs. To settle this question, as well as finally to fix the boundaries designated in the treaty of peace of 1783, between the United States and Great Britain, from the head of the St. Croix river to the Lake of the Woods, commissioners are to be mutually appointed by the parties. In case of disagreement the controversy is to be submitted to some friendly sovereign. All Indian nations engaged in the war on either side at the date of the ratification to be included in the peace, and to have their possessions restored. This is the whole substance of the treaty.

When the joy which the news of peace has so generally and so justly diffused, shall have somewhat abated, it will be natural for those who have not profited by the late calamities, to inquire, what beneficial object the treaty has secured to the country in return for the sufferings it has endured—for the blood which flowed—for the dangers which were encountered—for the millions that were expended—for the debt and taxes that have been fastened upon the community? To such an inquiry I should answer, that no one of the avowed objects of the war has been secured, but that all have been abandoned; that other important rights and privileges which we enjoyed without interruption before the war are given up.

The avowed objects of the war were stated at full length in the President's Message of the 1st of June, 1812, and in the manifesto reported to the house of representatives by the committee on foreign relations. The most important are the following: To compel Great Britain to revoke her orders in council, and to make compensation to American citizens who had suffered under their operation.

To compel her to relinquish absolutely, the claim of searching for and taking away from on board American vessels deserters from her service, her seamen or subjects; so that the flag should furnish protection to all who sail under it. To compel her to discharge all American seamen impressed in her service.

The conquest and consequently cession of Canada, though not avowed as a primary object of the war, was, after its commencement stated as an indispensable condition to peace.

The Canadas have not been conquered, the treaty does not contain a single stipulation on any of the subjects mentioned, and consequently, not one of the primary or incidental objects of the war has been "secured" by it.

When the overture of the British government

to restore the blessings of peace which succeeded the orders in council, had been rejected, this administration, to add importance to the subject, seemed to consider the relinquishment of the claim, to search for her seamen on board American vessels, on the part of Great Britain, as a stipulation without which no accommodation ever could take place—unless we ceased to be an independent nation. I will beg leave to present a few extracts, from public documents, which show the light in which they pretended to view this object.

In the president's inaugural speech, of the 4th March, 1813, is the following paragraph: "On the issue of the war are staked our national sovereignty on the high seas, and security of an important class of citizens, whose occupations give the proper value to those of every other class. Not to contend for such a stake, is to surrender our equality with other powers, as the element common to all; and to violate the sacred title which every member of society has to its protection."

In the instructions to our ministers appointed to negotiate under the mediation of Russia, dated April 15, 1813, are the following paragraphs:

"I have to repeat, that the great object which you have to secure, in regard to impressment, is, that the flag shall protect the crew."

"Your first duty is to conclude a peace with Great Britain, and you are authorised to do it, in case you obtain a satisfactory stipulation against impressment, one which shall secure, under our flag, protection to the crew."

"If this encroachment of Great Britain is not provided against, the United States have appealed to arms in vain. If your efforts to accomplish it should fail, all further negotiations must cease, and you will return home without delay."

In the instructions to our ministers at Göttingen, dated 28th January, 1814, is the following paragraph:

"On impressment, as to the right of the United States to be exempted from it I have nothing new to add. The sentiments of the President have undergone no change on that important subject. This degrading practice must cease; our flag must protect the crew, or the United States cannot consider themselves an independent nation."

The administration has made peace without obtaining any "security" for our seamen—without impressment being "provided against," and without obtaining any countenance to their principle that "the flag shall protect the crew." According to their former opinions, then, it would follow, that "the United States have appealed to arms in vain," that "they cannot consider themselves an independent nation."

But they have not only failed in obtaining security for this and other rights, but they have abandoned all the claims which they have magnified as so important to the country. I believe it is a principle of public law, very generally admitted, that after a nation has engaged in war for a right, of which nothing is said in the treaty of peace, it is considered that it has abandoned it. This opinion is strengthened by several official declarations made during the late war by those who may be considered as the organs of the government. In the report of the committee on foreign relations, made in the house of representatives, on the 26th January, 1813, is the following paragraph:

"The impressment of our seamen being deservedly considered a principal cause of the war, the war ought to be prosecuted until that cause is removed. To appeal to arms, in defence of a right and to lay them down, without securing it, or a satisfactory evidence of a good disposition in the opposite party to secure it, would be considered in no other light than a relinquishment of it. To attempt to negotiate afterwards for the security of such right, in the expectation that any of the arguments which had been urged before the declaration of war, and been rejected, would have more weight after that experiment had been made in vain, would be an act of folly, which would expose us to the scorn and derision of the British nation, and the whole world."

In the instructions to our ministers, appointed to treat with Great Britain, bearing date the 27th June, 1814, is the following paragraph:

"As it is not the intention of the United States in suffering the treaty to be silent on the subject of impressment, to admit the British claim thereon, or to relinquish that of the United States, it is highly important that any such inference should be entirely precluded, by a declaration, or protest, in some form or other, that the omission is not to have any such tendency."

The "treaty" has been made without "securing" any of the contested rights. No such "declaration or protest" is incorporated in it—consequently the "inference" must be that there is a complete "relinquishment" on our part of all rights and claims which formed the alleged causes of the war. Can we hereafter urge that our flag shall protect the crew sailing under it? Can we demand that our impressed seamen shall be discharged? Can

we object against the British definition of blockade? Can we contend against the legality of the principles on which her orders in council were founded, when we have relinquished compensation for captures made under them?

If we should attempt to negotiate hereafter on these topics, it would, according to the opinion of the committee on foreign relations, "expose us to the scorn and derision of the British nation, and the whole world." Thus, instead of keeping our claims alive, to be urged at a favourable moment, which I thought the correct policy, we have for ever abandoned them by engaging in the war.

It has indeed been said that "the causes of the war have ceased to operate" on account of the general peace in Europe, and consequently that it became unnecessary to insist on any condition recognising our rights. Admitting for a moment the fact as stated, one of two conclusions necessarily follows, either, that the object in controversy, particularly that of impressment, did not justify the war which lately terminated; or that whenever Great Britain shall again become belligerent, we shall be immediately under the necessity of recommencing hostilities. For it would be preposterous to calculate on her forbearance, to execute in any future war, what she deems a great and essential right which she would not even suffer to be questioned in the late negotiation. To avoid the first, the authors of the late war are obliged to admit the latter conclusion, in substance. What a prospect do these men present to the people of America, when they thus justify their former conduct.

But it is not a fact, that the claim of Great Britain to take her subjects from private friendly vessels has ceased to operate. At least there is no evidence to warrant such an assertion. She has made no declaration to that effect, and the claim is not incident to war alone. Our administration have contended, and very correctly, that it is not a belligerent right; but that its whole support rests on the duty of allegiance, due from the subject to the sovereign, consequently it operates at all times. Past experience shows too, that in practice, impressment is not confined to a state of war.

I have said, that not only the claims in controversy, have been abandoned, but that very important rights and privileges which we enjoyed without interruption before the war, have been lost. By the treaty of peace concluded in '33, Great Britain granted to us a concurrent right in the fisheries, on the banks of N. Foundland and in the gulf of St. Lawrence. She granted us the privilege also, to cure the fish on her shores under certain restrictions. In the late treaty, she refused to renew the stipulation, and thus an important source of national wealth has been cut off.

Before the late war, Great Britain had permitted us to trade with her East India colonies—a privilege which her own subjects, except the East India company, do not enjoy. It had been originally secured to us by the treaty of 1794. It was again provided for, by that of 1806. And though that instrument was rejected with disdain by Mr. Jefferson, we continued in the enjoyment of this most lucrative commerce, until the commencement of hostilities. It is now understood that we are to be in future excluded from it.

Thus it is most manifest that the fears of those opposed to the war, have been realised. We have not secured any of the objects in contest; we have abandoned them; we have lost others of vast importance; and we have been subjected to a complication of evils, from which it will require years, finally to extricate us.—Yet we have great cause to rejoice. The blessings of peace have been restored to a bleeding country: Though we have "secured" nothing involved in the controversy, but abandoned every thing—we are saved from impending destruction. With all the burdens which have been laid on the people, they still inherit a country where misery and slavery have not banished all the charities and comforts of life. Though a portion of their hard earnings, must still go to support those in luxury and splendour whom the late calamities have elevated to wealth and importance; yet it will be some consolation that the swarm of officers and contractors, who like the locust, of Egypt, have covered the country and are eating out its substance must be lessened; that many of them at least have their days numbered; at the end of which their own industry, and not that of others must gain them support. I say then, Let us rejoice!—But let us not forget the gratitude, which is due to Him who holds in his hands the destinies of nations, and whose goodness we have so eminently experienced as well in our late difficulties, as on many other occasions.

From the U. S. Gazette.

It is probable that some of the journeymen and underworkers of the administration, who are employed to repeat, like parrots, every day and every hour, that the late war was necessary and just in its origin, and honorable and successful in its termination, may, in part believe what they say. But not so Madison

himself and those who assist him in the management behind the scenes. They are not deceived, but deceivers. They have seen all the degrading and humiliating correspondence which has taken place between our commissioners and those of Great Britain, at Ghent, which they dare not permit the people to see. Mr. Madison had that correspondence before him when he had the assurance to send a message to congress accompanying copies of the ratified treaty, in which he says:

"I congratulate you and our constituents upon an event which is highly honorable to the nation, and terminates, with peculiar felicity, a campaign signaled by the most brilliant success."

When penning that sentence Mr. Madison, as well as every member of one of the houses of congress to whom it was addressed, knew, fully, that the British commissioners had absolutely refused to enter into any discussion of those topics which constituted the alleged causes of the war.

We state as a fact, that in the projet of a treaty, offered by the American negotiators, there was a long article on the subject of impressment, drawn up in detail and with great care, containing a proposal that the United States should adopt effectual measures to prevent British seamen from being employed in their navigation, which being satisfactorily accomplished and faithfully observed, Great Britain should stipulate to abstain from searching American vessels for seamen. The same article contained provisions respecting restitution of seamen heretofore impressed. The projet having been submitted to the British commissioners, was returned by them with various remarks, objections and arguments. But the only notice which they deigned to take of this all important article, which was forever to secure to the United States "free trade and sailors' rights," was simply to write at the bottom of it the civil word, "INADMISSIBLE."

Our ministers afterwards attempted to have the point reserved for future discussion and adjustment, obtaining a stipulation that nothing in the treaty should be construed to prejudice the claims of either party on the score of maritime rights. Even this negative concession was absolutely refused, and our commissioners were left to their choice to take the treaty as it is, or to have none.

When the treaty was received by the President, it was sent by him to the Senate, without any of the correspondence between the commissioners, which led to the conclusion of it. That correspondence was called for by a vote of the senate, and so unprepared was the execution to gratify even that body with a sight of those documents, that no copies had been made, and the originals were sent.

The editor is enabled, from information which he has received from unquestionable sources, to state the facts, and he pledges his reputation to his readers for their being substantially correct. An attempt was made in the senate to procure a vote for the publication of the correspondence, but the motion was overruled by the executive majority.

COBBETT in 1814.

"But only let them [the people of New-England] see the real objects of the PICKERINGs, the OTISEs, the QUINCYs, &c. and the fall of these men is as certain as the return of spring after winter..... But, hang them! my Lord, they are not worth your notice: they talk big, and hold themselves out as of great consequence, but they are poor things: indeed, my Lord, they are. TIMOTHY PICKERING used to be thought a very honest man: but after he was out of office, he seems to have abandoned himself to the revenge which his disappointment created. He had not the virtue to follow the example of his venerable employer, MR. ADAMS. The truth is MR. ADAMS had the public good solely in view, and that TIMOTHY had an eye solely to his private interest..... TIMOTHY who had been to the astonishment of all the world his [Mr. Adams'] Secretary of State, who was no more fit for the office, than your coachman would be fit for yours."

—Cobbett to Earl of Liverpool, Dec. 1814.

COBBETT in 1814.

"But Mr. PICKERING is an honest man; a man, who, I believe, sincerely loves his country, and would, as he has done before, stake his life in defence of her liberties. I know him very well: I had many opportunities of knowing his sentiments I always saw in his actions proof of great public spirit and the strongest attachment to his native country and to public liberty; and, as I am convinced he is still the same excellent man," &c. &c.

Cobbett's Register, Sept. 28, 1814.

"I make not a single exception, when I say that this Report [Mr. Pickering's Report of January 1799] contains more useful information than any thing ever published in America, and, as a state paper, it does infinite honor to the gentleman who wrote it and to the country that has had the wisdom to avail itself of the aid of his TALENTS and integrity."

Cobbett's Political Gazette, January 20, 1799.